

Abstract

The guest of the Over the Barriers program, historian Mark Solonin, believes that the USSR was technically ready for a war with Germany, and if it started it, it might be better for everyone.

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Dmitry Volchek

Mark Solonin

- I think even your most irreconcilable opponents will agree that your books - June 22, June 23 and June 25, dedicated to the events of 1941 - were written with genuine passion. There are cold-blooded historians who dispassionately relate to the subject of their research, you are an undeniably passionate person, passionate about the search for the truth about World War II, the truth that Soviet historians hid and distorted. How was your hobby born?

"It's certainly not a hobby, it's still an occupation. It was born a long time ago; his date of birth is probably in the region of 1983-84. Naturally, I was interested in this before, but somewhere in 1983, when Andropov was still alive, I managed (this verb will seem strange to a modern listener, but it was not easy) to see the Soviet central newspapers - Pravda and Izvestia 1939 of the year. Generally speaking, they were not issued.

I managed to see these newspapers and see a large map, for a whole page of Pravda, with the division of Poland, with the division of Finland, the Treaty of Friendship and Border. But nothing was said about him in any school textbook, in any military textbook. Here was in front of me - an agreement on friendship and border between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany of September 28, 1939. It was a strong impression, which even then, in 1984, I set out in a thick, very thick general black-bound notebook, which I keep at home to this day.

- You had a wonderful predecessor - Alexander Nekrich. Once, in Soviet times, as you got the newspapers of 1939, I got a copy of his famous book "1941, June 22". It certainly was an amazing edition. The book, officially published by a Soviet publishing house in 1965, was subsequently banned, removed from libraries, removed from everywhere, and the author was hounded in the most ruthless way. Will you agree if I call Alexander Nekrich your teacher?

I strongly disagree with all the previous statements. My fate is absolutely different from the fate of comrade Nekrich. Comrade Nekrich was hunted down: this means that he was expelled from a Soviet university and driven to work as a professor at an American university. This is not the heaviest punishment that fell to a Soviet person in 70 years of Soviet power, there were worse punishments. As for this book, I am a little

familiar with the history of its appearance in the Khrushchev era, when this new, next in a row, "truth of war" began to take shape - about the fact that there was only one bad person. All were good, all were heroes, wonderful commanders, like one man the entire Soviet people rose, but there was one bad man who interfered with everything - Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin. And from the point of view of these ideas, this next "truth", Nekrich's book was written. He would have received another State Prize for it, but the notorious October coup took place. Khrushchev was thrown off, Brezhnev was installed, that truth was declared false, the Khrushchev period was called voluntarism, and in the course of uprooting the previous Khrushchev period, Nekrich's book also came under distribution. The book, which today represents only a historical and literary monument: what is written there is now completely and unconditionally refuted by a new array of documents that have been introduced into scientific circulation, by those works that have been made over the past twenty years. Therefore, of course, this history has nothing in common with what I, for myself and for others, call the new historiography of the Great Patriotic War or the Second World War.

What kind of historiography is this and what is your truth about the war?

- This historiography, of course, began with Suvorov's book, it began with Bunich's almost literary, almost artistic-journalistic book "Operation Thunderstorm" or Error in the third sign, and so on. Then there were, in my opinion, exceptionally valuable works by Meltyukhov on the same subject, a large number of documents were published, which in fact

the most important.

As for "my" truth, in his books Suvorov stopped on the threshold of June 22. And then what next? We are not in a polemic relationship with him, he just wrote about one thing, and I take the next chronological step. Suvorov wrote that the Soviet Union, "Stalin", collective Stalin, tried very hard, strove to unleash a European war, he quite purposefully and consciously helped Hitler start, get involved, not be scared (Hitler could be scared, but he helped him a lot not to be scared) to start a pan-European war, he himself looted a little in this matter and in the summer of 1941 he was already preparing to enter not just a European war, but to enter Europe, that is, to begin a large-scale offensive operation to the West from the already significantly shifted Soviet borders. This is what Suvorov wrote, and I agree with it 200 percent.

And then the following, quite logical question arises: if it took so long, diligently and with great effort to prepare for a campaign to the shores of the Atlantic, then why, after one or two weeks, the Red Army flew off to the border line of 1939, and after another three months the Germans were already near Leningrad, near Tikhvin and near Moscow? I answer this question in my books. In short, the answer lies in what is called the human factor and motivation. Let down the human factor. There were a lot of divisions, there were a lot of tanks, there were a lot of aircraft, there was a huge line

of fortifications along the new border, a huge line of reinforced concrete fortifications along the old border, a huge amount of ammunition, which was just not there. There were 4.8 million in the armed forces at the start of the war, 5 million

mobilized in the very first week after the announcement of mobilization, by the end of the year, either 12 or 14, according to various sources, millions of people were mobilized. That is, the resource that was made available to such commanders as Zhukov is 5 plus 12-17 million armed men. With such a resource, the Red Army flew away from the border to Moscow in three months, because there were all the resources, but there was no motivation. And in the absence of motivation, in the absence of skill, this really terrible fusion - I don't know how and don't want, I don't want, because I don't know how, and I don't know how, because I didn't want to learn it - led to the fact that all these colossal mountains of equipment were abandoned on the roadsides and sometimes very much interfered with the Germans in the offensive. There was, for example, the First Mechanized Corps, one of the best in the Leningrad Military District, there was the Third Panzer Division, which fought with Manstein's Panzer Division for one or two days at most - then Manstein writes in his memoirs that with great difficulty they moved to the East, because the whole road was littered with the abandoned equipment of this division.

And in the archive in Podolsk I kept with my own hands a document written on a scrap of I don't know what, maybe the cover of the Belomor cigarettes, written by the same Berzarin, who victoriously became the military commandant of Berlin in 1945. A note in which he gives the command to the remnants of this division, which does not exist after two days: to collect the remnants of the personnel and withdraw them for reorganization.

- I would like to explain to our listeners that in your book "June 22" you analyze in detail and destroy the thesis known to all of us from school that the Soviet Union was not technically ready for war and that in June 1941 it was armed much worse than Germany. You prove that everything was exactly the opposite.

- There is not the slightest merit and novelty in this case. Because it's a fact. You see, the Copernican hypothesis is a brilliant scientific insight. We see that the sun is moving, and that we are moving around the sun - we need to think of it before. A

the question of who had more of what is a matter of knowing the facts and documents. As far as I remember, at least in 1988-89, already 20 years ago, the real numbers of Soviet mechanized corps, tanks, armored vehicles, trucks, aircraft were first published. That is, by the beginning of the 90s, all this factual material was available, it was published by many other historians. I also draw attention to the wonderful work of Meltyukhov, the book was called "Stalin's Missed Chance". So there is nothing new here. Perhaps I just took a closer look at this fact. Everyone saw that the Germans in the Southwestern Front, that is, in Ukraine, had, relatively speaking, 750 tanks, and in all the mechanized corps of the Southwestern Front there were 5 and a half thousand. It seems to be clear that 5 and a half thousand is more than 700, but if you pay attention to this fact, you can think about it.

- Another important detail from the book "June 22": you are considering the mysteries of the beginning of the war, when, it would seem, there were clear signs that someone from the Soviet command worked for Hitler, gave orders contrary to Soviet interests - on the Brest Fortress, for example. And you write "I do not believe." I think it's important that our listeners understand that you are by no means a conspiracy theorist.

- Of course, no conspiracy theories are needed, because the military catastrophe of the summer of 1941 is an event of such a scale that, in my understanding, simply cannot fit into the framework of any conspiracy schemes. Because such a catastrophe, such a defeat, such a collapse is always the result of the action of some huge tectonic forces, and in no way is a conspiracy of three or four malefactors.

- And why is the truth about the reasons for the defeat of 1941 so difficult to discover? And this state has been gone for a long time, and all the generals have long been in the grave, and you constantly complain in your books that many documents are classified. What and why are they hiding? Is there any rational explanation?

- You asked a very interesting question, but it is multi-layered. Now I'll try to cut it into layers. As for the question of what happened in the summer of 1941, there is an answer to it. There was a colossal, monstrous rout. A huge amount of equipment was abandoned, about 10-12 thousand tanks within one month, a comparable figure of aircraft within a month and a half, the total number of prisoners and deserters in the summer and autumn of 1941 is twice the initial strength of the active army, that is, five western military districts at the time of 22 June. I have a chapter in a book called So Much and So Much Again. That's how much it was, a little over three million, and once again so much - this is the number of Red Army soldiers who were captured or deserted. There is no mystery here, all these figures and facts are there, they are no longer disputed by anyone. The reason why this happened, its assessment will always be a matter of hypothesis. In this case, this is not a question of the archives, in no archive is that piece of paper on which it is written that the catastrophe of 1941 occurred for this and that

reason. There is no such paper, we will not find it. But it seems to me that the facts that are already known, which are given on a huge number of pages of my books, are quite enough to come to a conclusion. There are some very clear things. We see that the Red Army has lost 6.3 million small arms in six months. Small arms do not break in such quantities.

There are statistics on the structure of losses. For example, the Central Front in the region of Bryansk and Gomel during the 40 days of its existence lost 11 times more missing persons (in fact, in that situation it meant prisoners and deserters) than those who died and were killed. There are absolutely colossal, long-known numbers of prisoners. They are known both from our documents and from German documents. There is a fairly well-known, well-known history of Soviet mechanized corps, which lost 80 percent of their tanks in two, three, four days without coming into fire contact with the enemy. Tanks do not break in such

quantities.

In September 1939, the Red Army, on the same terrain, in Western Belarus and Western Ukraine, smashed the remnants of the Polish army, did what is called the "liberation" of Western Belarus and Western Ukraine. And in two weeks, on the same terrain, in the same weather conditions, 10-12 percent of tanks were broken in different mechanized brigades. Such a range. Well, one tenth is broken. And such that in three or four days 80 percent of the tanks from among those that were considered serviceable broke down - this does not happen. Therefore, on the one hand, it seems to me that there is more than enough, an excessive amount of indirect evidence that this whole mountain of weapons was thrown, but if we want to get documentary, in the narrowest sense of the word, confirmation of this hypothesis, we will not find it never. Documentary confirmation can only be a newsreel with sound, with a date counter in the corner, which shows how a soldier of the Red Army abandons a tank, gets out of this tank cursing obscenely and goes towards the nearest forest. We will never find such a newsreel for each of the 10-12 thousand tanks, and if we find it, they will tell us that this is a montage. Therefore, in my opinion, in this case, the problem of archives will change little. We have enough facts. Society, modern Russian, former Soviet, lacks the courage or desire to recognize these facts. Over

the years I have received an infinite number of e-mails, and an infinite number of discussions of my books and articles, and I see that some people simply write in the most direct text "you all go" and say that "I don't need either the truth of Solonin, no other truth, I don't want to think about what my grandfather did. I want to love my grandfather." As a human being, this is an absolutely normal position, there is even no need to object here. But, probably, at some stage it is necessary to reach the level where love and respect for grandfather are still shared (an absolutely necessary property of every person, grandfather must be loved, respected and helped) and the readiness to look with a normal look, without rose-colored glasses on the history of their country.

- Constantly in the list of new books published in Russia, I see more and more new editions of the memoirs of German officers, and soldiers too, studies of German military historians. One must think that the demand for a German view of the war is now especially great. This is also an interesting phenomenon. People are looking for some other truth and find it among the vanquished. I don't know if you agree with this observation.

- In fact, you are absolutely right. We go to any bookstore and see it. There is one small, nasty, ugly explanation that it is simply easier for publishers not to pay royalties, but to pirate German memoirs published in the 50s (the authors have long been dead) and simply print them. You will laugh, but that is also the case. But besides this, there are more serious reasons. There are two reasons for this, in my

opinion. One is connected with the fact that generals, and even colonels - that is, those people who were 30, 40, 50 years old during the Second World War - with rare exceptions, as you understand, are no longer alive. Therefore, these are always memoirs of people who have passed away. Soviet generals, marshals and colonels wrote their memoirs in that era that we all remember well, and these memoirs are rather evidence of the quality or not of the quality of the work of Moscow literary blacks. You understand how they were written. In the best case, the general told him something at the dacha, the literary negro turned this case into a book, then it was examined in all instances, approved, corrected twenty times, not considering it shameful to cut texts written twice by a hero of the Soviet Union or a marshal of the Soviet Union, as a result, those agitations were obtained that now, with the rarest exception, do not represent either literary or historical value.

Against this background, the memoirs of German generals, generals of the Wehrmacht, who served a certain number of years in prison, but then they were written in a free country, in a free Europe, in a democratic, new, renewed Germany, they are simply more informative. There was neither internal (well, internal censorship is always present in a person, this is a living being, not a computer), nor external censorship,

therefore, the memoirs of German generals, marshals and colonels are simply more informative, and at least to some extent objective. But I would like to draw your attention to the fact that in any bookstore there is now a huge amount of memoirs of Soviet soldiers, and this is the most valuable, richest layer of our history and culture. There is such a series, I think many people know it, Ilya Drabkin collects this series, "I fought on the T-34", "I fought on fighters" - that is, the memories of the most ordinary sergeants and lieutenants. Now these people, of course, are very old, nevertheless, these are memoirs written down now, written down when these absolutely simple people who lived a very long, hard, working life are no longer squeezed by censorship. And this layer of soldier's and lieutenant's memoirs, which in recent years has appeared on the shelves of our stores, is a very valuable source, very valuable work has been done. And I, taking this opportunity, want to say: dear comrades veterans, write, dictate to the tape recorder this most valuable historical evidence, no less valuable than the papers that lie in the Podolsk archive.

- I noticed that you often refer to the Military Historical Journal, but mainly to the issues of 1989-91. And the last time we all saw a mention of this magazine in the news was quite recently, in connection with an article that caused a scandalous resonance, which said that Poland was almost to blame for the fact that Hitler attacked her. Therefore, I want to ask you what happened to this main professional journal of military historians after perestroika?

I would love to reformat your question. In my opinion, it should sound like this: what happened in 1989–91, when this company of people who made their careers, biographies and, excuse me, apartments in Moscow and big money, what happened to them that they suddenly began to publish documents and began to publish with all the reservations, with all the peculiarities of style, after all, some serious articles? What hit them that they took at the beginning of 1992, in the 1st and 2nd

issue, published those very famous May 1941 considerations on the plan of the strategic reconnaissance operation of the Red Army, where it was written in black and white that it was not necessary to give the initiative to the German army and, of course, it was necessary to strike the first blow. I wonder what happened to them that they suddenly began to at least to some extent publish real documentary evidence? For me, this is somewhat of a mystery. Maybe they felt or it seemed to them that the government was changing? A wonderful book by

Alexander Gogun has recently been published, the title is terrible, the tabloid "Stalin's commandos", but under this tabloid title is the most valuable work on the partisan movement in Ukraine. There are data obtained by another Ukrainian researcher, he analyzed 302 personal files of policemen and some middle-level leaders of the police created by the Germans in the occupied territory of Ukraine, and, if my memory serves me right, every fourth is a former NKVD officer, a former party member or former secretary of the district committee of the party. Even like this. That is, there is a certain part of people who are in a hurry to testify their respect to any new government as quickly as possible. As you and I remember, in August 1991, it seemed to some, including me, that the government was changing, but everyone reacted to it in their own way. So they decided to pay their respects to the new government. Then it turned out that the government does not change, everything is in its place, only they are now called differently. Now not the first secretary of the regional committee of the CPSU, but the head of the regional administration. Accordingly, the fright passed, and everything returned to normal. The current state of Soviet and Russian military history, the Institute of Military History, the Academy of Military Sciences, headed by Comrade Gareev, is their normal, natural state. What happened to them in 1989-91 was such a historical jump.

- And the new historiography of the war, which you spoke about at the beginning of our conversation, is it you and Suvorov, or are there many other researchers, and do you feel that your ranks are also quite large?

- There can't even be any talk of having two, three or four surnames. For example, five collections under the general title "The Truth of Viktor Suvorov" have already been published. Again, the name is yellow, tabloid, created by the marketing department, however, five thick books have been published, collections of articles by various authors living in Russia, Ukraine, America, Europe, where they just do not live, writing in different languages, including those who have never been a Soviet person at all, born Americans and Germans, that is, there are already dozens of authors who are forming this new historiography of the war. Recently, from these five collections, a collection was published in Germany, the first swallow in German, entitled "Nine Russian Historians Accuse Stalin." Of course, not two or three names. There are numerous serious works.

Moreover, for some reason, someone leaves, does not waste time on conclusions of a global order, but in any case develops some layers, specific stories, continuously new facts, events are introduced, normal, professionally made descriptions of most military operations of the same 1941, comprehended in a new way serious robots on the history of intelligence, on the prehistory of the war, on Soviet military planning. Of course, it is necessary to mention the name of the now deceased Colonel Bobylev. An official man, a military historian, nevertheless, he did excellent work on the analysis of Soviet military planning, in particular, the analysis of the military-strategic game of the General Staff, which was held in January 1941, this plan for the invasion of Europe was actually worked out. There are dozens of families.

- Now we have already come to the plot of your book "June 23:" Day "M". You said that you are not arguing with Viktor Suvorov, but are continuing his work. I would like to clarify what you and Suvorov agree on, what you disagree on, and, in general, forgive me for such a personal question, are you friends?

- We are with Viktor Suvorov in the kindest relations, unfortunately, they are in absentia, but he tells me quite often calls, we are completely normal with him, you can say

friendly relations. Unfortunately, we have not yet had the opportunity to drink brotherhood, I think we have everything

ahead. Now, on to the serious question. I can put it very clearly in a few words. Viktor Suvorov hypothesized that Stalin planned to launch a large-scale strategic and offensive operation from the western borders of the Soviet Union into Europe in the summer of 1941. I fully agree with this. Victor Suvorov confirmed his hypothesis with the tiny number of scraps that he had at his disposal at that time, slipping out like the tip of an awl from a bag, some scraps of Soviet memoirs, some half-closed publications. Still, I wrote 15 years later than the first edition of Icebreaker came out, I had the opportunity to confirm the same hypothesis with a completely different archive of documentary material. The second hypothesis put forward by Viktor Suvorov is that the Red Army suffered a crushing defeat in the summer of 1941 because it was preparing for an offensive and was unable to defend itself. I categorically disagree with this, I believe that even one percent of common sense does not exist in this hypothesis. Viktor Suvorov knows my opinion on this very well. We did not agree with him. I think that this is a completely frivolous idea. There are no offensive tanks, there are no defensive aircraft, there is no army that can solve such a complex task as an offensive on enemy territory, but at the same time cannot solve the problem of defense on its own territory, having two lines of reinforced concrete fortifications created in advance. And in any case, not a single offensive operation of the Red Army in the summer of 1941 ended in anything but the heaviest losses. Therefore, the Red Army, of course, in the state in which it was, was not capable of either attacking or defending, and this, in my opinion, is very interestingly written in my book "June 25". Sorry for this publicity. It shows very interestingly how the Red Army tried to deliver a crushing blow to Finnish airfields, as a result of this crushing blow they lost 24 of their own bombers and damaged one aircraft at Finnish airfields - a captured Soviet SB. So with this second

component of the Suvorov hypothesis, I absolutely, categorically do not agree.

- Let's talk then, since you mentioned the book "June 25", about the second Soviet-Finnish war. It can be said that since childhood I lived against the backdrop of this war, because my dacha is located near Leningrad and the old Finnish border (by the way, it has not yet been completely dismantled, wire barriers stretch through the forest in some places) passed right through my dacha site. Near my veranda there was an old Finnish bunker, and there we dug up shells and bones. But I can't say that before your book I knew anything at all about the second Soviet-Finnish war, because this is probably the first monograph in Russia about completely forgotten events.

"In this case, I am forced to discard the remnants of any modesty and say yes. Things got to the point that when I worked in the Podolsky archive, on many documents, in particular, maps of military operations that I took from the archive, my signature was the first in the form. Actually, do you have any idea what this is about? For 60 years, hundreds of doctors of historical sciences did not even care to take and look at these maps and documents. In some cases, there were two or three more names, but no one really dealt with this topic, the war was completely deleted from Soviet historiography, from the historical memory of the people. If once there was some mention, it was only in the context of "the participation of the Finnish military in Hitler's aggression against the Soviet Union." It is clear why no one wanted to remember this war. Because it is one thing to look for and find objective reasons why

the most powerful German army won (indeed, Hitler's Wehrmacht of the first year is the best land army of the 20th century) and why the Red Army was beaten and defeated by such an enemy. There is still some explanation to be found here. But how to explain with something other than a lack of motivation, the defeat that the Finnish army inflicted on the Red Army, an army in which mobile units rode bicycles? This is not an exaggeration or a joke. They had two mobile formations - what the Germans had, say, a tank division, then the Finns had a jaeger brigade, the mobility of which

was achieved due to the fact that she rode bicycles along the forest paths. There is even a corresponding newsreel. And here is the story about how Finnish cyclists smashed the Soviet mechanized corps, this, of course, is a story that no one wanted to remember.

- But if there hadn't been this war, maybe there would have been no blockade of Leningrad?

- Undoubtedly. But here it is necessary to remove all "would". Of course, if there had not been this war, then the blockade of Leningrad would not have happened and could not have happened. Because Leningrad is not located on a peninsula, there is the Finlyandsky railway station, the same one to which Vladimir Ilyich arrived in a sealed carriage, a railway tape approaches it. Therefore, if it were not for the war with Finland, then the fact that the Germans reached the southern suburbs of Leningrad, that they cut the railway at Mga, that they left at the Mga station to Lake Ladoga, could not have created any blockade, because from the north a branch of the railway goes to Leningrad through Kexholm, Petrozavodsk and further, anywhere. Only because there was a second Soviet-Finnish war, the blockade of Leningrad became possible, all this is a nightmare and the death of hundreds of thousands of civilians. Moreover, Comrade Stalin could stop this whole nightmare with one political decision. Even before the start of the war (then the price of the issue would have been different), but even after the start, it would still be possible to agree. In fact, from the end of the autumn of 1941, there was already a de facto truce there, although it was not fixed in any way, and if the Soviet Union recognized the right of Finland to take away those territories that became annexed in 1940 as a result of the first war, if on these conditions succeeded, and I think it was quite realistic, to reach a peaceful agreement, at least a truce with Finland under the guarantees of the Western allies, that is, the British and Americans, then it would be possible to restore the railway connection with Leningrad, and we would not know the words " Leningrad Siege" and we would not understand what Piskarevskoe cemetery means.

“Since we’re already talking in the subjunctive, one more hypothetical question. Publicist and military expert

Alexander Khramchikhin recently raised the following question: Stalin planned to start a war with Germany, Suvorov is right here, and so are you, but maybe it would be better for the fate of the world - there would be no Auschwitz.

Yes, indeed, there is something to think about. With all my deep and long-standing dislike for Comrade Stalin, I still cannot put on the same scale the deaths of tens of millions of people, on the one hand, and the reputational successes of Comrade Stalin. To hell with him, it would be better if Comrade Stalin got something else in his reputation and would increase his political capitalization, as they say now, if at this price it would be possible to save tens of millions of people who died in these four years. Yes, of course, it would be better for everyone, from a normal, human, humanistic position, if in May 1940 Stalin stabbed Hitler in the back.

And then Hitler's back was very frail, everything that he had more or less combat-ready was thrown to the Western Front, that is, to invade France, Holland and Belgium. Throughout the vast stretch of Eastern Europe there were seven German divisions formed from reservists of a very low level of training, there was not a single aircraft in all German air defense districts, and only in Berlin there was one single fighter group, where there were 43 serviceable Messerschmitts. And in one of the books I wrote that there were two Soviet bomber regiments against one Messerschmitt. With such forces, Comrade Stalin could have stabbed his friend Hitler in the back in May 1940. Yes, of course, in this case, Eastern Europe, and not only Eastern Europe, would have ended up in the clutches of Comrade Stalin a few years earlier. But if at such a price it would be possible to save tens of millions of human lives, then, of course, I am for it.

- You have a book called "Fake History of the War" and you analyze the main misconceptions associated with the war. Not everything can be counted, but maybe a few of the most egregious?

- This book is still called "Brain Name". "Fake History of the Great War" is the subtitle. And this title "Brain-Having" quite adequately reflects the content, format and genre of this book. This is not a scientific monograph, I write in the preface that this is a book written for people who have time to read in the subway car, so this book does not pretend to be academic, there are almost never references to sources. I decided to make a simple book, and there, perhaps, not even the most flagrant falsifications, but the most amusing ones. For example, this famous story with an intelligence report on June 18, 1941, that

is, four days before the start of the war. NKVD intelligence put a document on Stalin's desk that said that the Germans would start a war in the coming days, that they would bomb, and Comrade Stalin wrote a resolution on the margin that this was not a source, but a disinformant, and he should be sent to his mother, directly, clearly wrote in Russian letters, to which mother should be sent. For 15 years, journalists of all sorts and camps were indignant: how is Comrade Stalin, they put a document on his table, and he sends it to his mother?! I just took and read this document to the end. If we are indignant, then let's at least read what we are indignant about. It turns out that Comrade Stalin was absolutely right. It was a completely disinformation document, it was one of the elements of the game of disinformation of Soviet intelligence, which was conducted by German intelligence. An absolutely understandable thing. It was written there that when the war starts, the German aviation will bomb, first of all, not airfields in the border zone, which, of course, it did in reality, not the command posts of the troops of the western districts, which it did in the very first hours of the war, not bridges and crossings in the operational rear of the Soviet troops, which she did in the very first hours, but that supposedly German aircraft would fly to bomb car repair shops in Moscow, that is, a car service, as you now call it, and the Svir-3 power plant, located in Karelia. It really was a clear disinformation, and disinformation is already at the level of a cartoon, at the level of a parody, at the level of banter, and I fully understand and share the emotions of Comrade Stalin when serious people, the NKVD leaders, bring such a mocking banter of the enemy to the table, and are offended, that the political guide to it

did not take it seriously. There was, for example, such a funny moment. I repeat once again that this is a popular book for those who do not have the time, energy and desire to read thick and serious monographs.

- A lot of responses were caused by an article published on your website about the so-called "feast of the winners", about what happened in East Prussia after the entry of Soviet troops, and I hoped that you were working on this story, and the next book would be on this topic. But you said that there are not enough materials, and the article will remain an article. In that case, what will be your next subject or do you intend to continue to develop the plots of 1941?

- I'm not a poet or a writer, so my next topics are determined not by the flight of inspiration, but by access to certain information layers. You asked a very good question at the beginning of our conversation about what was happening with the Military Historical Journal and other official journals. That is, at the turn of the 1980s-90s, there was a certain ejection of lava from the volcano, it is always very short, a small amount of mass, material flies out. There was a release, and in these few years a certain volume, an array of documents, became available. This array of documents was comprehended, thought over, processed by those historians, about whom I said that they are forming a new historiography of the war. This documentary array of information has already been processed and comprehended. You can, of course, write the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth books, but this is unlikely to be interesting or necessary for anyone. And, the next leap, the next stage in the development of this new historiography of the war, in my opinion, will become possible only when the next information release occurs, that is, for this it is necessary once again to lift the statue of Felix Edmundovich Dzerzhinsky with the help of a cable and a crane.

- It is unlikely that this will happen in the near future, although, who knows. I looked at what they write in Internet forums and discussions about your books and, frankly, I felt sorry for you, because there is so much hatred and malicious reviews, and often from people,

not read, but sure that you are the enemy. Of course, the author cannot be pleased that his books are discussed by wild people who have barely mastered the letter. So the question is: how do you see your ideal reader? Who is this: a student interested in history, an elderly man, most of whose life was spent in Soviet times? Who are your books for?

- First, I want to draw your attention to the fact that you, for obvious reasons, do not see the control panel of my site. On my site there are hundreds of letters written in absolutely adequate language, from people, as I understand it, of various ages, many of them are even suitable for my grandfathers, who speak very, very warmly about my books and thank me. For which we thank them. Therefore, I am quite calm about the hysterical reaction of people who did not even hold my books in their hands, but they heard from Vasya that there is such a Russophobe, an agent of the CIA, Mossad and Mi-6 at the same time, like Solonin. As for who they are written for, it is clear that they

are written for a person of any age, any educational level, I tried my best to somehow strike a balance so that the book was written in human language, so that it could be read, including , and a reader who does not have many years of experience working with documents, texts, and so on, so that each figure and each fact is followed by a link to some collection of documents.

I heard another hidden question in your words, I can answer it. People of the older generation, and it is precisely those who are eyewitnesses of the war, participants in the war - at least a very significant part of them - have a very positive attitude towards my books. I must tell you that the detractors consist of approximately two age groups. This is Moscow's "office plankton" 20-25 years old, who grew up in the era of \$147 per barrel, in an era when Russia, along with the price of a barrel of oil, "got up from its knees." So they became absolutely cool patriots. Moreover, interestingly, I already noticed this, it's just a tough addiction: the more patriotic the squealer is on the Internet, then he will definitely have an English-language or German-language login, he will never call himself Vasya, but some Red Rat or something else in this spirit. And plus those people

whom I for myself call the word "veteran of lectures in the Red Corner." That is, a person who is now 60-70 years old. You see, the arithmetic is simple. Of course, he didn't see the war, and he didn't see the post-war years either, he attended lectures in the Red Corner for decades, he listened to what the party organizer said in the shop, he listened to what was said at the solemn meeting dedicated to the next anniversary of the Victory, and these "Red Corner veterans" really often have a very negative attitude towards any, not only mine, attempts to revise established myths. As for the veterans of the war, who drank it all themselves, then, in this case, I'm not talking about my ambitions, I'm

talking about the assessment of the look, that is, it is quite important to note that I was approached by people who I fit as grandchildren, who thanked me, who with tears in their eyes told me that they were grateful that on the threshold of their lives they could finally see that the truth about the war was written on paper, that it should not be betrayed by word of mouth, closing the door. I received letters from people who wrote: "My mother died in the Leningrad blockade, what a pity that she did not live to see and could not read your book "June 25". I repeat once again, I'm not talking about my ambitions and my author's pleasure, I'm talking about the fact that in fact the people of that generation, war veterans, are not "veterans of lectures in the Red Corner" - I did not conduct sociological research, but some Part,

of course, not all, some part waited and wanted to live until that day, when, finally, the truth about the war will be spoken, written, discussed publicly, openly and without fear.

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